

is one which must add to the reputation of every one concerned.

With regard to the nave roof, my own conviction is very decided, that a flat ceiling, something like Peterborough, was at least designed; but I am quite open to be convinced to the contrary by yourself or any other competent person. EDWARD A. FREEMAN.

#### GIBBONS'S WOOD CARVINGS.

AFTER a period of repose, during which little was attempted in architectural or ornamental decoration to call for the exertion of the abilities of the artist in this branch of design, the architect and wood-sculptor once more were associated, and Wren (who possessed the eye of the artist with the knowledge of the architect) and Gibbons worked together. Pre-eminent skill and taste were displayed in these more modern specimens of the art. The dining-room was enriched with representations of the spoil and weapons of the chase; fruit, flowers, game, and fish, hung in rich arrangement and profusion on the walls; over the doors were splendid trophies of the seasons or the elements, the inter-panelling, borders of glasses, or the frames of pictures, were in perfect keeping with the rest, taken from the designs or pictures of Spuyders or Rubens. In the decoration of the library Gibbons was equally happy in his choice of subjects: portraits of great men, clusters of gems, medals, and coins, trophies of music, musical instruments, and implements of art, here found place. Gibbons had a most masterly manner of grouping and pressing into his service objects no other person would have dared to venture upon; he was the founder of a new school, and he had studied only in that of nature; lace, nets, strings of pearl, shells, weeds, ferns, and flowers, streaming amidst fish, birds, sceptre, coronet, and sword, require, for a proper arrangement, no slight knowledge of and power to produce effect. His correctness in delineation was such, that when tested by comparison with nature, the feathers of a plover were found perfect, even to the quiver. Gibbons had a peculiar manner of drawing and composing his subjects in his trophies and most of his drops: he appears to have made a rough draft of some general idea in outline only, then carefully to have drawn one side of his subject within this limit, to have then turned the paper over, and, tracing the outline, filled it up in keeping with the other side. This is so perfectly visible in some of his compositions, that the same block of wood would work either side. This remark will apply to most of the drops in wood or stone at St. Paul's, Hampton Court, Windsor, and the Board Room at the New River Head: an open flower on the one side has the half closed or back flower on the other. Gibbons worked from a very limited variety of flowers, and these were of a nature to be easily and boldly worked. The greatest quantity of Gibbons's carving in London is at St. Paul's,—all the flower-work of the choir, screen, and organ, is his, as also the greater portion of the stone ornament within and without: the four grand ovals in the stonework under the dome, and the two entablatures over the north and south doors, are wonderfully worked. It is known that many Flemish carvers were employed on the work, and their style of carving is very apparent, particularly over the window of the south and east outside work: the flowers are more various, but the effect is bad; they are worked to a nearer sight, but in their place, at the required distance, they form a heavy and confused mass: with Gibbons, on the contrary, the character of the relief was perfectly studied and carried out. The altar of St. James's Church, Piccadilly, is enriched by him, but an attempted repARATION has destroyed much of its original character, for some Gosh has caused it to be painted.\*

"THE CHIMNEY KING."—"THE CURE, CAUSE, AND PREVENTION OF SMOKEY CHIMNEYS."—On the strength of an advertisement in our own pages, we purchased the pamphlet (as we expected to find them) so headed, and owe it to our readers to say that the whole affair is a mere catch-penny piece of quackery.

\* From the Journal of Design.

#### Miscellaneous.

**TO REMOVE THE STAIN OF PORT WINE FROM MARBLE.**—Some correspondents have asked us how to do this. We are not aware of any nostrum to be applied to the surface of white or veined marble that will extract port wine or other vegetable stains. We give a plan recommended by Mr. C. H. Smith, but this can only be put in practice by a mason or other person having convenient premises and implements. Suppose the article stained to be a slab, such as the shaft of a chimney-piece or top of a table; the only successful mode of procedure is to open the pores of the marble by rubbing it on both sides with sand and water, so as completely to remove the polish; then lay it, exposed to wind, rain, and all atmospheric influences, in a bed of clean, wet sand, from a quarter to half an inch thick, the sand to surround the marble up to its thickness, so as to be level with the upper surface: thus situated, the marble and sand should be sluiced with clean water two or three times a day, until the stains have quite disappeared, which probably will occupy ten or fifteen days; the marble is then to be repolished in the usual manner. White marble is so very delicate, and so easily stained, that great care is requisite in the above process, that the article on which the sand is laid will not impart an additional stain: the best material is new stone of any kind, or new deal boards.

**IRON AND GLASS BUILDINGS.**—Permit me to suggest that an exhibition of designs for *ferruginous* edifices (to coin a word) in the Exhibition of 1851 would be appropriate. There can, I think, be little difference of opinion as to the effect the great exhibition will have in giving impetus to the construction of buildings of a like character. I think it probable that Russia, at least, will desire to possess something like, if not more extensive than, our glass building. The emperor intends to visit it (it is said) in person. It is not beyond the compass of possibility that a structure of glass and iron will one day exhibit to the beholder the flora of the universe, as the great glass case will the works of art of the whole world. Perhaps, too, it will share, on the opposite side of the river, the attention, the admiration, and the wonder of the visitor to the new Houses of Parliament. Raised on lofty arches, and towering higher than any glass-iron edifice yet constructed, such a building might be appropriately reared in the locality named. Be this as it may, I am desirous to impress THE BUILDER, and English architects in glass and iron with the "great fact," that there is wide scope for the display of artistic taste, skill, and genius, in this new kind of edification.—OPTIC.

**DIRECT LINE OF STREETS FROM OXFORD ROAD TO SHOREDITCH CHURCH.**—Your columns are often usefully occupied by suggestions for street improvements. I will briefly submit for consideration what for many years has been a favourite scheme of my own. We want a direct thoroughfare from the western to the north-eastern extremities of the metropolis, ending at Shoreditch Church; and without the necessity of threading the mazes of the City streets. An inspection of the map will show the wide line of Old Street-road, now comparatively little used, terminating as it does abruptly at the Charterhouse-wall, in Goswell-street. To get any farther westward is pretty nearly impracticable. To cut short all matters of detail, what is requisite is to carry on the said line of road through to Holborn, terminating, if possible, somewhere about Middle-row. Let me see what this would accomplish. A new approach to St. John-street and to Smithfield would be opened for hay and cattle, saving much traffic through crowded streets. Crossing St. John's-square to Clerkenwell, it would render the Sessions-house approachable and intersect the new street now forming from Blackfriars-bridge towards the north and north-western roads. Holborn-hill, Smithfield, and much delay would be avoided, shortening distance, whilst the Shoreditch railway station would become less inaccessible from the west. If we take a survey of the property along my proposed line from end to end we shall find it to be of as little comparative value as any perhaps in the metropolis. Make it accessible, and a vast length of good frontage would become available, at

an enormously increased value. And what a gain in public comfort and convenience to be enabled to pass in nearly a straight road, uninterrupted, from Oxford-street to the great outlets at Shoreditch Church.—H. T.

#### STREET OBSTRUCTION FROM GAS PIPES.

—A case of some importance to contractors has come before Mr. Bingham, at Marlborough-street, who thus states his decision:—In this case a contractor under the Western Gas Company placed several lengths of gas pipe close to the kerb-stone, east of the Opera House, preparatory to being placed in a trench to be excavated. The pipes projected three or four inches above the kerb-stone, and lay three or four days. The complainant stumbled over one of them, fell, and was bruised and endangered. A local Act of the 5th William IV. gives the commissioners power to authorise contractors to lay down gas pipes, and the 65th and 70th sections of the General Paving Act, 37th Geo. III. c. 29, tend to show that a penalty cannot be inflicted by a magistrate where work is done [as in this case by consent, or] to the satisfaction of the surveyor of the pavement; while the 36th section of the local Act reserves to persons suffering loss or damage from the carelessness or want of skill of any persons employed by the contractors the remedy of indictment or action. It appears to me, therefore, that a magistrate has no jurisdiction in circumstances such as the present, and the summons must be dismissed.

#### BRITISH ARCHEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

—At a meeting, on November 27th, Mr. Pettigrew, V.P. in the chair, communications were received from Mr. Brent, of Canterbury, and Mr. Brockton, of Gateshead; also from Mr. J. Taylor, of Colchester, recording the discovery of an inscription upon a large stone found in the Roman burial place in his grounds near the town; from Rev. H. Jenkins, of Stanway, upon parts of Colchester Castle, which he considers to be the remains of a Roman temple, and a detail of excavations made near the castle, which he thought supported his views; and from Mr. W. D. Saul, describing some interesting stone circles and other remains which he had lately visited in Cornwall. Models were exhibited, and Mr. S. gave his views generally upon the subject. This produced a lengthened and instructive discussion which stands adjourned to the next meeting, December 11.

#### HORNBY AND THE SEWERS' COMMISSION.

—A determined stand is being made by the rate-payers of Hornby against the steps taken by the Metropolitan Sewers' Commission to bring them under the operation of the Sewers Act of 1842. A meeting was held on the 27th ult., at which a strong protest was unanimously agreed to, and funds subscribed, to enable a committee then appointed to resist the obnoxious measure.

#### NATIONAL BATHS AND WASH-HOUSES IN FRANCE.

—In the Legislative Assembly, on Saturday last, a debate took place on a Bill proposed by M. de Malou for opening a credit of 600,000 francs for cheap baths and wash-houses for the poor. M. Raudot and M. Adelsward objected to the injustice of taxing the country for the advantage of the town. What the town populations suffered from was not want of cleanliness, but moral degradation, which made them sink far below the level of the inhabitants of towns in England. The House decided by 371 votes against 272 to proceed to a second deliberation.

#### LOW TENDERS AND BUILDERS' BANKRUPTCY.

—A contractor has sent us some stringent and injurious remarks on Mr. Trego's bankruptcy, and is very angry with us for not publishing them. We adhere, however, to our determination. He states that the debts amount to 70,000*l.* and that the assets to meet them are comparatively *ad.* To explain this would not be difficult, if many of the contracts entered into by the party in question were like one which is just now before us. Mr. Trego had contracted to build four houses in the Gloucester-road, Baywater, for Mr. Froom, for 2,500*l.* The work done when the stoppage occurred was valued at 500*l.* Fresh tenders were then sought to complete the cases, and the following were sent in:—

Glean	£307 5
Fry and Son	249
Lawrence	275 5

Comment is unnecessary.